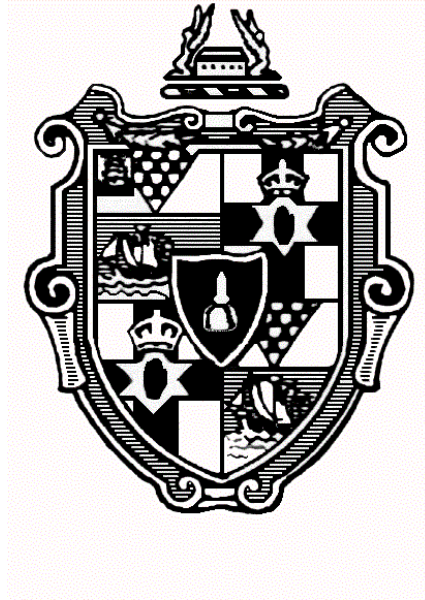


# *Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim*



## **Guidance on the Grievance Procedures**

2017

## **Guidelines for handling Grievances**

### **1 Objective**

**1.1** The objective of this procedure is to provide every member of a Lodge in the Masonic Province of Antrim who has a grievance against another Brother, Lodge or Masonic body, with the opportunity to have it examined quickly and effectively, and to have that grievance resolved at the earliest practicable moment if at all possible.

**1.2** Ideally, Brethren should initially raise any grievances informally with whomever the grievance is held, with a view to finding a solution in the proper context of brotherly love and harmony.

**1.3** It should be recognized that issues of unmasonic behaviour or conduct will not, and should not, be raised or dealt with under this grievance procedure. Where a grievant does during the course of this procedure raise such an issue then the procedure must be halted immediately and the grievant referred to the appropriate procedure for dealing with unmasonic conduct.

**1.4** Sections 2 and 3 of these guidelines are presented in simplified form as a flow chart in Section 5.

**1.5** In Sections 2 and 3 it is expected that at any stage all options for the resolution of any grievance will be explored before proceeding to the next stage.

### **2 Grievance Procedure for Subordinate Lodges**

**2.1.1** Should any member/members of a lodge under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Antrim (PGLA) have a grievance against another member/members of his/their lodge or the lodge itself he/they should raise the issue with his/their Worshipful Master. The WM should endeavour to secure a fair and equitable solution to his/their grievance within three months of the grievance first being raised formally.

**2.1.2** If the Worshipful Master feels that he cannot resolve the grievance himself or has a conflict of interest, it is recommended that the following process should be adopted.

#### **2.2 Stage 1**

**2.2.1** The Worshipful Master will set up a Lodge Grievance Committee comprising 3 - 5 lodge members designated by the Worshipful Master and chaired by a senior officer of the Lodge to hear the grievance. This committee shall exclude the WM and any member who has a direct interest in or is a party to the grievance

It is the duty of the Lodge Grievance Committee to hear both sides of the grievance and, when in possession of all the facts attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and impartial manner, reporting the outcome to the Worshipful Master and all the relevant parties.

## **2.3 Stage 2**

**2.3.1** Should the grievant(s) consider that his/their grievance has not been resolved to his/their satisfaction under Stage 1 of the procedure and all options have been exhausted, he/they may submit an appeal in writing to the Provincial Grand Secretary (PGS) of PGLA setting out the basis of the grievance and grounds for appeal and providing, where appropriate, all relevant documentation or witness statements.

**2.3.2** The PGS will convene a PGLA Grievance Committee comprising five members nominated by the PGLA Executive Committee from the Hearing Panel (including a Provincial Assistant Grand Master who will chair the Committee but who will not take part in the decision making process; and excluding other members of the Executive Committee) within twenty-one days of receipt of the written grievance and make available to the Committee all relevant information in his possession. The PAGM shall chair the Committee but shall not take part in the decision making process.

**2.3.3** It is the duty of the PGLA Grievance Committee to hear both sides of the grievance and when in possession of all the facts attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and impartial manner reporting the outcome to the PGLA Executive Committee, the aggrieved party and any other relevant parties.

## **2.4 Stage 3**

Should the grievant(s) consider that his/their grievance has not been resolved to his/their satisfaction under Stage 2 of this procedure, he/they may submit an appeal in writing to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland setting out the basis of the grievance and grounds for appeal.

## **3 Grievance Procedure as between Lodges and other Masonic Bodies**

### **3.1 Stage 1**

**3.1.1** Should an aggrieved party or parties or a lodge under the jurisdiction of PGLA have a grievance against PGLA, any Officer of PGLA, or a member of another subordinate lodge within the province he/they should submit his/their grievance in writing to the PGS setting out the basis of the grievance.

The PGS will convene a PGLA Grievance Committee comprising five members nominated by the PGLA Executive Committee from the Hearing Panel (including a Provincial Assistant Grand Master who will chair the Committee but who will not

take part in the decision making process; and excluding other members of the Executive Committee) within twenty-one days of receipt of the written grievance and make available to the Committee all relevant information in his possession. If the grievance is against a Senior Officer of PGLA, then a Senior Officer from a neighbouring Province shall be invited to chair the Grievance Committee.

It is the duty of the PGLA Grievance Hearing Committee to hear both sides of the grievance and when in possession of all the facts attempt to resolve the issue in a fair and impartial manner reporting the outcome to the PGLA Executive Committee, the aggrieved party or parties or lodge and any other relevant parties.

### **3.2 Stage 2**

Should the grievant(s) consider that his/their grievance has not been resolved to his/their satisfaction under stage 1 of this procedure, he/they may submit an appeal in writing to the Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland setting out the basis of the grievance and grounds for appeal and in accordance with the rules and regulations of Grand Lodge.

### **4 Review**

These Guidelines will be reviewed from time to time by the PGLA Executive Committee in order to assess their suitability and efficacy.

### **5 Flow Chart**

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Flow Chart

